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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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| 09/542,418      | 04/04/2000  | Thomas F Dibiaso     |                     | 5678             |

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, TUAN N

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3653

DATE MAILED: 12/05/2001

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/542,418

Applicant(s)

DiBiasi et al.

Examiner

Tuan Nguyen

Art Unit

3653



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE three (3) MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 9/20/01
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 14-19, 33-40 and 48-70 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 14-19, 33-40 and 48-70 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some\* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

## Attachment(s)

- 15) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 18) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 16) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 19) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 17) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_ 20) ☐ Other:

Art Unit: 3653

#### DETAILED ACTION

1. Applicant's election without traverse of Group I in Paper No. 7 filed on Sept. 20, 2001 is acknowledged.

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 14-19, 33-40 and 48-70 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Stevens et al.'099.

Stevens et al.'099 disclose an apparatus and a method for processing mail envelopes having three or more contents or documents. The apparatus and method comprise an envelope opener 28 to sever and open three edges of each of the envelopes; an extractor 29 to extract the contents or documents from the opened envelope; and a singulator 31 to receive the extracted contents or documents in face-to-face relation and serially feed the contents or documents along a conveying path. Stevens et al.'099 further have a feeder 25 for feeding the mail envelopes to the envelopes opener; a thickness detector 100 for detecting the thickness of each of the envelopes; a system controller 15 to control the feeder to feed a trailing piece of mail envelope in response to the detected thickness of a leading piece of mail envelope to maintain a proper spacing between the leading and trailing piece of mail envelopes; an orienting station (column 42, line 39 to column 44, line 16) to detect and correction a proper orientation of the extracted contents or documents;

Art Unit: 3653

and a sorter 12 for sorting the extracted contents or documents into one of a plurality bins. The singulator has a first roller 509 (Fig. 28) for urging the contents or documents rearwardly and a second roller 508 for urging the contents or documents forwardly; and a third roller 517 for urging the contents or documents forwardly while the contents or documents are engaged in the nip.

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

5. Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stevens et al.'099.

Art Unit: 3653

Stevens et al.'099 have been discussed in paragraph 3 above. However, Stevens et al.'099 do not disclose setting a depth of the third edge cut to be greater than a depth of cut of either the first or second edge.

It would have been obvious to one skill in the art to modify the depth of the third edge cut of Stevens et al.'099 to be greater than the depth of cut of either the first or second edge. Such modification depends from the size of the contents or documents inside the mail envelope, i.e. if the size of the contents or documents is smaller than the size of the envelope, the depth of the third edge cut can be greater than the depth of cut of the first and second edge.

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Kruk, Jr. et al. are cited to show other similar mail envelopes cutting, extracting and sorting apparatus.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Examiner Tuan Nguyen at telephone number (703) 308-3664.



TUAN N. NGUYEN  
PRIMARY EXAMINER

12/3/01

tnn,

December 03, 2001.